

a National Project is still pending with the Union Government.

(b) if so, the action taken so far by the Union Government in this regard:

(c) the time by which this project is likely to be declared as a National Project: and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (c). Do not arise.

(d) No project in irrigation sector has been declared as National Project.

Cray Super Computers

3469. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :
SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are likely to permit the purchase of the Cray Super Computer for the Indian Institute of Science from Silicon Graphics;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the decision is likely to affect the nation's own super computer project; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to safeguard the interest of indigenous industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Does not arise.

[Translation]

PM's Talks with World Dignitaries

3470. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL :
DR. VALLABH BHAI KATHIRIA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Prime Minister met various dignitaries of other countries during his recent visits to Harare and Rome; and

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof, dignitary-wise?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b). During his visit to Harare to attend the G-15 Summit, Prime Minister had meetings with the President of Egypt, Prime Minister of Malaysia, Prime Minister of Senegal and President of Zimbabwe.

Egypt

The meeting was in the form of a tete-a-tete and included a review of bilateral relations as also issues of international interest.

Malaysia

During the meeting with the Prime Minister of Malaysia on 3 November, bilateral political and economic issues were discussed as well as how best to take India-Malaysia relationship forward. Regional and multilateral issues of common concern were also discussed. The need for working together in forums like G-15 and World Trade Organisation was emphasised.

Senegal

Discussions with the Prime Minister of Senegal included a review of the status of various bilateral projects which India is undertaking/contemplating in Senegal. It was also agreed that the President of Senegal would visit India in early 1997. A memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of Entrepreneurship and Technical Development Centre in Senegal was signed under which Senegal would provide infrastructural support and India would provide technical expertise, equipment, training and personnel for small industries projects for 3 years.

Zimbabwe

In a gesture demonstrative of India's commitment to South-South cooperation, our Prime Minister gifted to the President of Zimbabwe, a rural automatic telephone exchange manufactured in India. A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation for the development of small scale industries in Zimbabwe was signed on 2 November, 1996 which stipulates that Zimbabwe would provide infrastructural support and India would provide technical expertise, equipment, training and personnel for small industries projects for 3 years.

2. During his visit to Rome, the Prime Minister held discussions with the president of Indonesia, Prime Minister of Italy, Vice President of Iraq, President of Cyprus, Prime Minister of China, First Vice President of Iran, Prime Minister of Nepal, President of Cuba, Prime Minister of Bangladesh and President of Afghanistan.

Indonesia

During his meeting with President Soeharto of Indonesia, the two leaders discussed means to build and expand bilateral relations. The need to strengthen India's relations with ASEAN countries in general was also discussed. India's interest in participating in Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) was expressed.

Italy

During his meeting with Prime Minister of Italy, Prime Minister discussed matters of bilateral interest including

ways of strengthening relations and current international issues.

Cyprus

During his meeting with the President of Cyprus, the Prime Minister held discussion on matters of bilateral interest as well as ways for strengthening relations between the two countries and current international issues.

China

Prime Minister met Chinese Premier Li Peng on 16 November and expressed the hope that President Jiang Zemin's visit to India would lead to improve relations between the two countries. The two sides expressed their respective view-points on a number of issues, including those of concern to either side, which came up for discussions during the meeting.

Bangladesh

Prime Minister met the Prime Minister of Bangladesh on 17 September and reviewed bilateral relations. It was agreed to take steps to enhance relations in all areas of interest to both sides. Prime Minister also briefed the Bangladesh Prime Minister on the situation in the region and referred to Pakistan's support for terrorism in India.

Iraq

Prime Minister met the Vice President of Iraq on 16 November. Bilateral relations and future economic cooperation with Iraq after the UN economic sanctions against that country are lifted, were discussed.

Nepal

The Prime Minister received the Prime Minister of Nepal on 17 November. A wide range of subjects were covered during discussions and the friendly, cordial nature of bilateral relations was reiterated. The discussions emphasised not only the need for intensifying bilateral economic cooperation but also the need for diversifying trade relations. During exchange of views on latest developments in the South Asian region, specific emphasis was also laid on the need for exploiting the immense economic potential of the region for the benefit of its people.

Iran

During the meeting between the Prime Minister and First Vice President of Iran on November 16, issues of bilateral, regional and international importance were discussed.

Afghanistan

During the meeting with the President of Afghanistan on November 15, situation in Afghanistan was

discussed. Our Prime Minister reiterated India's support to the Rabbani Government and called for cessation of outside interference in Afghanistan.

Cuba

Prime Minister called on President Fidel Castro on 17 November. The two leaders recognised existence of extremely warm and cordial relations between the two countries over the last several decades and need to strengthen them further. They discussed the prevailing international situation in relation to Russia, China, Palestine etc. and multilateral economic issues, in particular the question of eradication of poverty and hunger, augmenting agricultural production, population control and South-South cooperation. President Castro stressed the need for cooperation among Third World countries in solving their problems. He wanted India to play a leadership role and reiterated Cuba's desire to see India as a Permanent Member of the Security Council. He accepted invitation of our Prime Minister to visit India at his convenience.

[English]

Bridges in Bihar

3471. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of bridges constructed on the National Highways in Bihar since 1994;

(b) the total expenditure incurred thereon;

(c) whether some of the proposals of construction of bridges in Bihar are pending with the Union Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) Seven.

(b) Expenditure upto 3/96 is reported to be about Rs. 263.98 lakhs.

(c) and (d) No proposal of Bridge works is pending with Ministry.

Indian Assistance to Nepal

3472. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Projects being implemented in Nepal with the assistance from India;

(b) the cost of those Projects and the extent of assistance extended by the Government for implementing those projects; and

(c) the steps taken to improve bilateral relation between both the countries?